

Gowrie Farm

NOTTINGHAM ROAD

From the Pastures & Fairways of Gowrie Farm



PHOTO: ALAN BENNETH

News from the golf course

Denis Schmidt, who is in charge of the construction of Gowrie golf course, reports that things are progressing smoothly, despite the recent extreme heat and winds. All the fairways have been planted and mown to playable height. The tees are also complete and at the correct height, and the greens are also complete, seeded to L93 bent grass, a cool season grass cultivated in Oregon, USA, that will remain green throughout the seasons. The greens are currently on 6mm; they need to get to 4mm, the final putting speed (9 on the Stimpmeter – a device used to estimate the speed of the green).

Denis and his team are also busy with

planting the indigenous grasses in the rough areas between the fairways, using both plugs and grass seed. A task that is going to keep them busy for the next few weeks is the completion of the bunkers. All the bunkers have been dug, and are awaiting delivery of the sand. 'It is going to be a huge job to get the sand into all the bunkers – there are almost 68 bunkers in total,' says Denis. The delivery trucks will have seven or eight drop-off points at the golf course, and the sand will then have to be loaded into each bunker using a TLB. 'It's a bit like being a farmer,' says Denis. 'We have to take advantage of the weather, and it's a seven day a week, 365 days a year job. Hard work, but very rewarding.'

ABOVE: The fairways are cut using this special hydraulically controlled, ride-on mower.

Meet your neighbour: Grant Neill

Grant Neill heads up Grant Neill Construction, the company busy erecting the clubhouse and pro-shop, and the first syndicated house at Gowrie Farm. Grant is so impressed with the Gowrie concept that he's bought a property for himself, and will start construction of his home this month.

'Until now the company's work has largely been at Mount Edgecombe on the north coast, but when Guy Smith asked me to come up to the Midlands to do some work on the Gowrie estate, I leapt at the opportunity,' says Grant. 'My wife and I had been planning to get a place in the Midlands for a while, and our son will be starting at Clifton next year. It's a better lifestyle here for kids, and living at Gowrie Farm will allow them to enjoy the open spaces, the dams on the property, and riding bikes on the country roads.' His new property has wonderful views down the valley towards Michaelhouse.

Grant is a keen mountain-biker, and when he's working in Nottingham Road, he brings his bike and takes advantage of the Midlands countryside. He can't wait to move to Nottingham Road, and is thoroughly enjoying working here. 'It's a pleasure working here – everyone is willing to assist, and everyone helps everyone else. It's also more laid back, and I find I can really focus on my work as there are fewer distractions.' Grant believes in being 'hands-on' on his sites: 'The more often you are on site, the more work gets done,' he says.

The syndicated house Grant Neill Construction is working on is one of a number that will be built on the estate. Shares will be sold for a period of occupation. The advantage over timeshare is that the buyer actually owns a percentage of the property, which appreciates in value. 'Gowrie is the premier estate in the area,' says Grant. 'It's at the centre of all the development in the Midlands.'

PHOTO: GAYNOR LAWSON



ABOVE: The first syndicated house at Gowrie is nearing completion.

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Gowrie Farm
SYNDICATED GOLF LODGES

Agents for Gowrie Farm

Peter Greene and Rob Dickson of Meander Real Estates are the Midlands agents for Gowrie and Gowrie Farm. Their main sales office is located inside the Junction, adjacent to Gowrie. They can be contacted for sales queries and brochures, and are also the best people to ask about site placements, the Gowrie architectural code etc.

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Mike Whiting of Winchester Marketing is marketing Gowrie Farm in Johannesburg. He can be reached on 011 327-7620.